

***Sanicula marilandica* L.**

black snake-root

Apiaceae (Parsley Family)

Status: State Sensitive

Rank: G5S2

General Description: Adapted from Hitchcock et al. (1961): Perennial with a cluster of fibrous roots from a short simple caudex or crown. Stem solitary, erect, mostly 16 to 48 inches tall, generally branched only above. Basal and lowermost cauline leaves long-petiolate, the blade $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 6 inches wide, palmately 5 to 7 parted or palmately compound, the segments or leaflets sharply toothed and sometimes shallowly lobed, or some of them (especially the two lateral ones in a 5-parted leaf) often more or less deeply bifid. Cauline leaves usually several, gradually reduced upwards and becoming sessile. Ultimate umbels about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide at anthesis, greenish-white, subtended by a few narrow bractlets, mostly 15 to 25 flowered, the staminate flowers more numerous than the perfect ones, or some umbellets all staminate. Calyx lobes firm, lance-triangular, attenuate, slightly connate at the base. Styles elongate, often persistent and longer than the prickles of the fruit. Fruits ovoid, $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch long, $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch wide, covered with numerous uncinat basally thickened prickles, the lower ones rudimentary. Mericarps subterete in cross-section.

Identification Tips: *Sanicula marilandica* has fibrous roots and greenish white flowers, whereas the other species of *Sanicula* in our range have taproots and yellow or purple flowers. The leaves superficially resemble false bugbane (*Trautvetteria caroliniensis*).

Phenology: Identifiable June to mid-August.

Range: Peripheral in Washington; adjacent Idaho and British Columbia, east to Newfoundland, south to Florida and New Mexico. In Washington, the species is known from Okanogan, Ferry, Pend Oreille, and Stevens counties in the Eastern Cascades and Okanogan Highlands physiographic provinces.

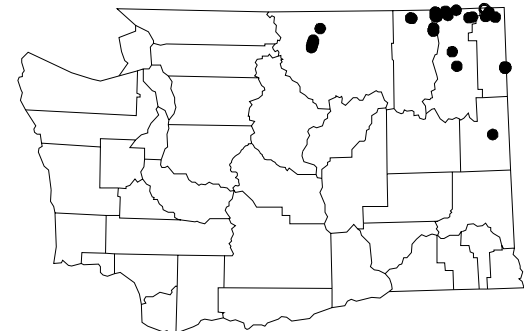
Sanicula marilandica

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Known distribution of
Sanicula marilandica in
Washington



● Current (1980+)
○ Historic (older than 1980)

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Habitat: Moist, low ground, such as meadows, riparian flood plains, moist woods, and marsh edges. Some of the Washington occurrences are on calcareous substrates. Elevation ranges from 1500 to 2900 feet (WA). Associated species variously include *Picea engelmannii*, *Thuja plicata*, *Populus trichocarpa*, *Betula occidentalis*, *Alnus incana*, *Cornus stolonifera*, *Cornus canadensis*, *Ribes lacustre*, *Linnaea borealis*, *Clintonia uniflora*, and *Aralia nudicaulis*.

Ecology: The species probably has the ability to withstand at least moderate flooding, given its occurrence within floodplain habitats. Although the species has no wetland indicator status (USFWS 1988), it generally occurs in areas that are at least seasonally pretty moist.

State Status Comments: There are less than 40 occurrences of this species in Washington.

Inventory Needs: Additional inventory is needed in appropriate habitats throughout northeastern Washington.

Threats and Management Concerns: Timber harvesting, cattle grazing, recreation, mining, hydrologic alteration, and exotic species are all threats to the species.

References:

Hitchcock, C. L., A. Cronquist, M. Ownbey, and J.W. Thompson. 1961. *Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest, Part 3: Saxifragaceae to Ericaceae*. University of Washington Press, Seattle. 614 pp.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 1988. National list of vascular plant species that occur in wetlands. USFWS Biological Report 88 (24).